

Statement of Frans Rosen, Styleform IT

My company, Styleform IT, has been a Facebook developer since 2007 and has built a number of apps on Facebook's platform, including one of the most popular breast cancer awareness and fundraising apps in Scandinavia, the Pink Ribbon App. For years, I built apps based on Facebook's promise of a fair and level playing field only to watch Facebook take deceptive and punitive actions against smaller startups in favor of companies who were clearly paying Facebook tons of money in advertising. In the summer of 2018, I learned of Six4Three's allegations from its public complaint and everything I had witnessed Facebook do since 2007 started to make sense to me. Facebook had been weaponizing user data as a tool to curry favor with certain companies and to arbitrarily wipe out potential competitors. In other words, Facebook was deliberately violating the entire world's privacy and building a lawless platform in order to acquire and maintain its monopoly. That's the real reason why my business suffered so much and why my apps had to pivot and shut down.

Now that it all made sense to me, I was furious at what Facebook had done. In November 2018, I decided to sue the company in San Francisco for the very same reasons as Six4Three. I even retained Six4Three's lawyers to help me with the lawsuit. Earlier this year, Facebook accused those lawyers of conspiring to commit a crime with Six4Three based on the U.K. Parliament's seizure of evidence in Six4Three's case. Facebook has presented no actual evidence of any crime or fraud committed by the lawyers, but the judge in that case has somehow apparently agreed with Facebook. Because of that, the lawyers were forced to withdraw from the case because it is illegal in California to both defend yourself as a lawyer and also defend your client for the same alleged crime. Facebook also claimed in the Six4Three case that my case was "tainted" because I had hired the same lawyers. For that reason, the lawyers were forced to withdraw from my case as well. Last month, the lawyers withdrew from my case, and I have been left to try to pursue justice on my own. I have not yet found an attorney willing to take my case, but the longer this takes, the more likely Facebook will try to stick me with its costs and fees, somehow remarkably making me the bad guy just like they've tried to do to Six4Three.

Without any actual evidence or any formal complaint of wrongdoing, Facebook has been able to intimidate and harass me and my lawyers to the point of creating a chilling effect that makes it almost impossible for me to pursue justice. This is what small companies are up against when they try to fight Facebook. It is not economic for any one company to go up against Facebook. We must unite together. If we don't, Facebook will continue to get away with all its crimes in the absence of a government willing to protect small businesses and free and competitive markets. More than 40,000 businesses were wiped out in 2015, but they still haven't received any relief or remedy or any apology from Facebook. I am evaluating all my options right now and hope to find California counsel who is willing to take this fight on because it's the right thing to do.